

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6503

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 28, 2008

Title: An act relating to approving the segmented mathematics assessment as an alternative assessment.

Brief Description: Approving the segmented mathematics assessment as an alternative assessment.

Sponsors: Senators McDermott, Brandland, McAuliffe and Rasmussen; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/21/08, 1/28/08 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6503 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Eide, Holmquist, Kauffman, McDermott, Rasmussen and Weinstein.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, students have two ways to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) and graduate from high school: 1) meet the state standard on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in reading, writing, and mathematics; or 2) meet the state standard on a legislatively approved alternative assessment. Alternative assessments are required to be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the WASL for each content area. Students must take the WASL at least once prior to taking an approved alternative assessment. Three alternative assessments have received legislative approval:

- The Grade Point Average (GPA)/WASL Cohort Comparison: A student's grades in math or English/language arts classes are compared with the grades of students with the same classes and who passed the WASL. This option is only available to students in 12th grade with an overall cumulative GPA of at least 3.2 on a 4.0 grading scale.
- The Collection of Evidence (COE): A student compiles classroom work samples developed under a teacher's supervision. Each student collection is scored at the state level by a panel of educators selected and trained by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- PSAT/SAT/ACT/Advance Placement Exams: A student earns scores at or above a state-designated level on specified PSAT, SAT, ACT, and Advance Placement exams.

Until 2013, students may also graduate from high school without a CAA if they meet the state standard in reading and writing on the WASL or one of the approved alternatives, and continue to earn mathematics' credits and take the WASL until they graduate or meet the state standard.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, students in special education who are not appropriately assessed by the WASL, even with accommodations, may earn a Certificate of Individual Achievement by passing a WASL at a level 2 or by submitting a portfolio of work.

The 2007-09 biennial budget provided 2.3 million dollars for the development of a tenth grade segmented math course and assessment that presents the mathematics Essential Academic Learning Requirements in segments and meets other specified requirements.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The segmented math course and assessment developed by the SPI is added as an approved alternative assessment for the mathematics WASL beginning in the 2007-08 school year. The mathematics Essential Academic Learning Requirements are presented in segments. When all the segments are considered together the content and rigor are comparable in content and rigor to the high school mathematics' WASL.

By December 1, 2008, and annually through December 1, 2011, the SPI must report to the Legislature the number of students who enroll in the segmented mathematics course, the number of students who successfully complete the course, and the number of students who enroll or complete the course and also meet the state standard on the high school level mathematics WASL.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): The segmented math course and assessment will not be an approved alternative until the 2011-12 school year instead of in the 2007-08 school year. Until that time, SPI will annually report to the Legislature the number of students who enroll in the segmented mathematics course, who successfully complete the course, and who also meet the standard on the math WASL.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on January 15, 2008.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This will assist students to have the basic building blocks in mathematics and allows them to focus on the math skills that we know that they need followed by an assessment to determine whether the skills have been learned. The course is already being offered to fulfill the math requirement that the Legislature put in place last year but now the assessment needs to be legislative approved. Some students fail to show their understanding of math on the WASL but they can show what they know on an alternative. This alternative will provide a broader alternative for students to access and is a

positive approach without backing away from standards. We support our current graduation requirements. Need to set high standards and then provide many ways to get there.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Joe McDermott, prime sponsor; Dr. Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dori Tate, Kim Howard, Parent Teacher Association; Marc Frazer, Washington Roundtable; Mary Alice Heuschel, Superintendent, Renton School District; Dan Steele, Washington State School Directors Association; Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals; Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators; Thelma Jackson, Black Education Strategy Roundtable.